

VZCZCXYZ0001  
OO RUEHWEB

DE RUEHUNV #0511/01 2601736  
ZNY SSSSS ZZH  
O 161736Z SEP 08  
FM USMISSION UNVIE VIENNA  
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 8421  
INFO RUEHBJ/AMEMBASSY BEIJING IMMEDIATE 0730  
RUEHRL/AMEMBASSY BERLIN IMMEDIATE 0686  
RUEHLO/AMEMBASSY LONDON IMMEDIATE 1000  
RUEHMO/AMEMBASSY MOSCOW IMMEDIATE 0761  
RUEHFR/AMEMBASSY PARIS IMMEDIATE 0857  
RUCNDT/USMISSION USUN NEW YORK IMMEDIATE 1323  
RUEHBS/USEU BRUSSELS PRIORITY

S E C R E T UNVIE VIENNA 000511

SIPDIS

DEPT FOR ISN/RA AND IO/T

E.O. 12958: DECL: 09/15/2018

TAGS: [AORC](#) [IAEA](#) [KNNP](#) [IR](#)

SUBJECT: IAEA/IRAN: P5+1 WILL TAKE CUES FROM POLDIRS ON  
BOARD RESOLUTION

REF: UNVIE 494 AND PREVIOUS

Classified By: Ambassador Gregory L. Schulte for  
reasons 1.4 b and d

Summary

-----

¶1. (C) In a German-hosted P5 1 Ambassadors meeting on September 16, no members of the group were instructed as to a possible Iran resolution at next week's IAEA Board meeting, and all awaited the scheduled September 19 5 1 Political Directors meeting for guidance. While Germany appealed for a Board resolution, Russia and China seemed to discount the possibility of such a move. Based on this and other consultations, Mission sees little scope for a successful Board effort short of a clear pre-decision at the political level to produce a resolution.

¶2. German Ambassador Ludeking made a valiant attempt, rebuffed by Russia, to find commonality among P5 1 views and argue for concerted Board action in support of the Secretariat. Rather than the broader diplomatic context of P5 1 negotiations, Ludeking enjoined P5 1 Ambassadors to focus on the task at hand in Vienna, namely the Board's response to the Director General's "disappointing" report and how to "stimulate" Iranian cooperation. He also provided a readout of FM Steinmeier's discussions the day before with Iranian FM Mottaki, which went nowhere on nuclear issues. Russian Ambassador Zmeyerovsky provided a "different" reading of the DG's report than the EU3 1, even expressing "understanding" of Iran's position on the "alleged studies." Ambassador Schulte rebutted these arguments, but Russia continued to discount the weaponization issue. Chinese Ambassador Tang provided a measured reaction to the DG's report and expressed concern about the lack of substantive progress on activities with military dimension. Seeking common ground, Germany suggested a short technical resolution reflecting the report to support the Secretariat. Russia was not responsive to this and other EU3 arguments in support of a resolution, citing the failure (for which it was largely responsible) of past Board efforts to agree on a resolution. Ambassador Schulte made a final appeal for P5 1 unity on Iran, which Ludeking hoped could be demonstrated in the Board. End Summary.

DG Reports "Dead End"

-----

¶3. (C) German Ambassador Ludeking opened the P5 1 meeting by providing a readout of FM Steinmeier's September 15

discussions with Iranian FM Mottaki, which he characterized as disappointing and having gone nowhere on nuclear issues. Instead, Mottaki wanted to address Georgia and investment in Iran. Focusing on the task at hand in Vienna, Ludeking sought input on IAEA Board aspects for the P5 1 PolDir meeting on September 19. He explored the potential for Board action in the face of a disappointing DG report and the clear frustration of the Secretariat having reached a "dead end street." More than gridlock or a stalemate, UK Ambassador Smith argued that the Secretariat's unequivocal report made clear Iran was to blame for the lack of progress. Ambassador Schulte agreed that the report was universally negative on all aspects of Iranian cooperation and called for sending an unambiguous message to Iran. The issue was not one of gridlock but of roadblocks set up by Iran. For France, "disappointment" was an understatement, and the report fueled a growing sense of urgency. Not only was there no progress on anything, French DCM Gross noted, the report raised new elements and also enumerated specific pragmatic measures Iran could take. It called for "more than business as usual" by the Board.

#### Russia Discounts Weaponization

-----

¶4. (C) Russian and Chinese Ambassadors preferred to talk about the broader context of negotiations and defer decision-making to P5 1 PolDirs. Both provided a more sanguine assessment of P5 1 talks with Iran, and noted positive contacts with the European Commission (Cooper-Velyati discussions) and the IAEA Secretariat. (Note: The EU Commission rep in Vienna clarified that the EU was still awaiting Iran's reaction to the P5 1 offer. End Note.) China also cited Ahmadinejad's meeting with President Hu Jintao during the Para-Olympics, and urged resumption of negotiations.

¶5. (C) Regarding the DG's report, Russian Ambassador Zmeyerovsky insisted on a less negative reading and cited, as an example, the non-diversion of declared nuclear material. He noted some progress and the need to influence the process positively. Russia would have preferred more progress, but he counseled patience and expressed "understanding" for some of Iran's arguments on the access to the "alleged studies" documents and matters of national security. These were the most difficult questions, he noted, and Iran was being asked to prove a negative. Russia also underlined the need for Board consensus and questioned whether the Secretariat sought the Board's support. Chinese Ambassador Tang was more measured in his comments, noting that China was still studying the DG's report, and counseling time and patience. There had been contacts between the Secretariat and Iran, talks and quite a few visits, he observed. However, Tang expressed concern about the lack of substantive progress on activities with a military dimension. He also reported Iranian Ambassador Soltineh's views on issues beyond the work plan and conventional areas beyond Agency's scope.

¶6. (C) Ludeking discounted calls for patience on the part of the P5 1, noting that he had been working on the issue since 2002 and patience had been the hallmark of EU3 endeavors, but was not reciprocated by Iran. Ambassador Schulte further noted that Iran had been presented with information on weaponization since 2005, had dragged out the process through the work plan, and still refused to address it using access to the documents as an excuse. Iran had not even tried to explain itself, he argued, and "contacts" (leaving inspectors waiting in hotel rooms) do not constitute progress. Rather, Iran's strategy in the Board was to question the credibility of the documents, the integrity of the inspectors and the mandate of the Agency on weaponization. Zmeyerovsky did not agree with the U.S. assessment insisting that Iran had been confronted with concrete information on weaponization not long ago and that these were delicate issues for states to address. The fact that these were "alleged" studies indicated that we were on shaky ground, he added.

#### Seeking Common Ground

-----  
17. (C) Ludeking sought to focus the discussion on Board action noting that the Vienna P5 1 was not a forum to comprehensively discuss the Iran issue. Common ground could be found, he offered, on the need to "stimulate Iran's cooperation with the Secretariat" and "doing something that was conducive to a peaceful outcome" as Russia and China had argued. Despite the failure of previous efforts to get a resolution, Board action was appropriate at this time. There was nothing positive in the report, he noted, and Iran had done only the bare minimum on its Safeguards obligations and nothing to comply with Board and UNSC obligations. Another commonality was to support the Secretariat's work and mandate. Ludeking proposed a brief resolution that reflected the language in the summary of the DG's report. Within the narrow context of Vienna, the UK added that Board pressure (not just incentives) was one avenue for "stimulating cooperation" and we should not miss this opportunity as doing so would be a prescription for stalemate.

18. (C) Zmeyerovsky countered that the UNSC had already empowered the Secretariat with all it needed to pursue the investigation, and took issue with EU3 1 characterizations of the degree of Iranian cooperation, noting again that Iran cannot prove a negative. He felt that the Board "taking note of" the Secretariat's report would be enough but would report the P5 1 discussion to capital. Zmeyerovsky all but rejected Ludeking's suggestion of a technical resolution by which the Board would express itself on the report and give a boost to the Secretariat. Three past efforts for a resolution had failed, he observed, and "we must be realistic."

19. (C) France noted that Paris had hoped for Vienna's input on a Board resolution for the PolDir discussions. Although the P5 1 had failed in the past, there was language reflecting the report that should be acceptable to the P5 1. French DCM Gross also reported that the DG had told EU Missions that a consensus Board resolution would be useful. Zmeyerovsky retorted that this was all a repeat of last time. Ludeking concluded that the P5 1 Ambassadors could not make a recommendation to PolDires on a resolution, due to differing views on what would be appropriate. He noted some points of commonality, including on supporting the Secretariat. Ambassador Schulte made a final pitch for P5 1 unity and resolve on Iran, notwithstanding disagreements on Georgia, which Iran hoped to exploit to keep the pressure off. Ludeking hoped that there could be a demonstration of such unity in the Board.

-----  
Bilateral Meeting with Chinese  
-----

110. (C) Following the P5 1 meeting, Ambassador Schulte met privately with Chinese Ambassador Tang. Ambassador Schulte reviewed some of the same argumentation for a resolution just covered in the broader meeting, and noted especially that Iran will be looking for differences amongst the 5 1 to exploit. It is important, therefore, that we all stay on message stressing that the onus is squarely on Iran to meet its obligations to the IAEA and UNSC. When queried on China's views as how best to prompt Iran to be positive, Tang rehearsed the same points as earlier, stressing that we must keep focus on "big picture" and take no action in Vienna that would set back our broader diplomacy. The one new twist Tang offered is that perhaps we need "new ideas" for convincing Iran to move forward with the Agency, and offered the idea of a "a new work plan" at the IAEA as one possible example. In response, Ambassador Schulte walked Tang through the history of Iranian efforts to use the previous work plan to draw out the IAEA process and delay consideration of the central weaponization issues; unfortunately, a new work plan would likely not be at all helpful.

-----  
Sept. 15 "Like-Minded" meeting  
-----

¶11. (C) Ambassador Schulte hosted a meeting of like-minded counterparts (EU3, Australia, Canada, Japan, Italy and New Zealand) just prior to the release of the Director General's Iran report on September 15. Regarding a Board resolution on Iran, all like-minded thought the underlying imperative and rationale for a resolution would only be strengthened by the then-pending DG's report. However, none of the like-minded had instructions and all deferred any decision to the EU3 3 Political Directors meeting scheduled for later in the week. Absent a high-level decision to table a resolution, France said it would not engage further on a Board resolution in Vienna. The like-minded anticipated that Russia would not be keen on a resolution, with Germany cautioning that while a Board resolution had value, this must be weighed against the cost of breaking Board consensus. UK made similar comments. Canada, Japan and New Zealand discounted any chance of a meaningful consensus resolution; Australia was also generally negative on the prospect for a Board resolution. Canada and Italy also noted, however, that the September Board would be the last chance to pursue a resolution before the Board composition changed next month. (Note: After the September General Conference, Cuba, Egypt and Malaysia will be on the Board. End Note.)

-----  
Arabs/Others  
-----

¶12. (C) Ambassador Schulte also hosted a separate meeting with Arab group and NAM Ambassadors (Albania, Algeria, Egypt, Iraq, Malaysia, Morocco, Pakistan, Saudi Arabia) as well as the UK. Quoting from the "Financial Times" article on this being the "most damning" report on Iran, Ambassador Schulte stressed the lack of progress and Iranian cooperation on any front. The UK also underlined the dissatisfaction of the Secretariat with Iranian cooperation and the need for serious consideration of the weaponization information. The first question from the group was whether a Board resolution was contemplated. Morocco asked about the status of the P5 1 and Iranian offers and noted Iran's lack of cooperation with Agency and the need to respect Board and UNSC decisions. Algerian Ambassador Feroukhi (the next Board Chair) noted that most of the report focused on weaponization and tried to spin this as proof of Iran's responsiveness to IAEA questions. Ambassador Schulte explained that this was not the case. Egypt cast the report in the context of "two Middle East" and the double-standard with Israel. Finally, Pakistan asked why the weaponization documents could not be shared with Iran. Overall, there seemed to be little movement on the part of Arab group and NAM positions. We have also learned separately that the NAM statement to the Board on Iran will quote the July Tehran Ministerial Declaration.

-----  
Comment and Recommendation  
-----

¶13. (C) The rationale and imperative for Board action via a new resolution on Iran has only deepened in light of the Director General's report (septel). But it is clear that the content of this latest report has not changed the Vienna dynamic on a prospective resolution. Per the above, there seems strong consensus among the like-minded in Vienna that a clear P5 1 decision at the political level is a necessary precondition for beginning negotiations on a resolution text here. Absent such instructions from the political-level, we can put the best face on strong national statements and by perhaps pursuing further action at the UNSC. We can also use a possible Board resolution on Libya to generate points for our diplomacy and press guidance that highlight the stark contrast between Iranian (and Syrian) and Libyan behavior, noting the different outcomes to date of the IAEA investigation and international reaction. But another successful effort to push through a resolution on Iran that Russia opposes would not be helpful to our goal here of supporting the IAEA's investigation.

SCHULTE